"But in regard to the kingdom's laws, it is a certain fact that 671
there are very few of them, because, in my opinion, there is no 571
great need of any in order to live in accordance with the customs 626
of the land. The people are brought up to work, to have very little to do with foreigners, not to undertake anything which might disturb them and to live an idle and /115/ listless life although not lacking any of the things necessary to preserve it. The king's will, which does not greatly interfere with his people, takes the place of a great many laws for them. . . . The manner in which the inhabitants of the land live with one another is highly civil and obliging. Unfriendliness and quarrels are banished... they all have enough to live on and get along on, so that one does not hear of thieves except as a thing quite out of the ordinary. . . . But the /565/
mandarins do not behave in the same way. Indeed, their insolence and their insulting and criminal conduct dim the praise which the common people merit on this account, because they abuse the power which they have in the kingdom, and when they see something which pleases them... they act in such wise as to find means for taking possession of it.

"But if we should now pass to the person of the king in order to 643*
describe him, there is no monarch, no matter how powerful, whom 174
he does not regard as beneath him, and it would indeed seem that 648
he affects not to yield in any particular to the emperors of China... Only rarely does he appear in public... preferring to be worshiped by his people as a hidden God rather than as a man like themselves and of the same nature... He allows himself to be seen only twice /116/ a year, for a period of three days, by his people, who receive this grace from their prince with such gratitude and joyous sentiments that he forgets nothing on these occasions which might contribute to their amusement. For this purpose there are several /527/
elephants which are trained to do a thousand little tricks and several wild animals which are kept chained and made to fight... finally there are wrestlers and gladiators and others, with their skirmishes which last until last until evening and terminate all this rejoicing...

"Of all the prerogatives which he (the king) has, and which are 643*
a further mark of the extent of his power, that of having several 576
petty tributary kings in his dependency who come to his court to do him homage and acknowledge him as their sovereign and who give him superb presents, is by no means the least. He receives these ambassadors in a great parlor seated on an extremely high throne and garbed in his ceremonial robes, and replies to their civilities